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THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of Cheng, Doreen  
Serial No.: 09/176,171  
Filed: 10/21/98  
Title: **DISTRIBUTED SOFTWARE CONTROLLED THEFT DETECTION**

Atty. Docket No.: PHA 23,503  
Group Art Unit: 2736  
Examiner: Pham, T.

Honorable Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**Preliminary Amendment**

Sir:

Prior to the examination of this application, and the determination of fees, please amend the application as follows.

Please cancel claims 1-16.

Please add the following claims.

17. A home or office security system comprising:

a network via which a plurality of appliances communicate to effect a control of one or more appliances of the plurality of appliances,

a first appliance of the plurality of appliances having:

a first appliance component that is configured to effect a primary function of the first appliance that is independent of security, and

a status reporter that is configured to communicate a status of the first appliance via the network;

an alarm activation processor, operably coupled to the status reporter, that is configured to receive the status, and to effect an alarm response dependent on the status.